

100 1st Street North, Ste. B
P. O. Box 576
Cascade, MT 59421



MISSOURI RIVER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS COUNCIL

Phone: (406) 468-0056
Fax: (406) 468-0052
mrcdc@missouririvercouncil.info
www.missouririvercouncil.info

EXHIBIT 9
DATE 3-05-07
HB 805

Council Organization

The Council is truly a grassroots entity with all 15 Conservation Districts along the Missouri River directing Council projects and plans. The Council looks at the Missouri River in its entirety in Montana – 730 miles of river and 1,460 miles of river bank - a watershed that includes everything east of the Continental Divide in Montana.

To more firmly establish the grassroots base of the Council, four river reach work groups have been created: Upper, Middle, Reservoir, and Lower. These groups recommend projects and tasks to the full Council and provide support for Council projects that encompass and/or affect the entire river corridor. In return, the Council provides funding, direction, and support for local projects that improve the river corridor in that immediate area while furthering the Council's overall goals for the entire river.

Bringing Federal Funding into Montana:

- **\$57,000,000 Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program** – The Council has supported the CREP since 2000 and is working with the State FSA office to allow funding of wider riparian buffer zones and establishment of hardier grassland areas with fewer noxious weeds.
- **\$55,000 Missouri River Recovery Funding** – For the last two years, the Council has asked the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to fund the Double R Dredge which enables irrigators below the Fort Peck Dam to operate their pumps during variable water release levels. The Corps recently gave \$15,000 to the dredge, plus committed \$40,000 annually for staff funding.
- **\$50,000 BLM Challenge Cost Share Grant** – The Council suggested and supported the BLM's grant proposal to produce a video that portrays the local residents' rich history and experiences in the area now called the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument.
- **\$24,737 Local Empowerment Program** – The Council worked with MACD to fund weed control, education, recreator safety, reduction of landowner/recreator conflicts, water quality, and riparian area protection projects along the Missouri River. The projects targeted nearly 100 river miles, more than 82,000 acres, and more than 106,000 citizens.
- **\$4,700 Invasive Species with Volunteers Grant through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** – Although the funding received was not enough to purchase a mobile weed wash station as proposed, the USFWS has since committed to work with local groups to contract vehicle wash stations during the opening weekends of bow and rifle hunting seasons.

In the Works:

- **Additional Missouri River Recovery Funding?** – The Council is the only grassroots group from Montana that has applied for a seat on the Drafting Team for the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee, an advisory group that will assist the Federal Working Group in designing \$54.8 million worth of recovery projects in the Missouri River Basin.
- **Additional CREP Funding?** – The Council is currently working with the State FSA office, the local NRCS office, and local landowners to draft plans for a CREP that would focus on the lower reach of the Missouri River and its major tributaries.
- **EPA Targeted Watershed Grant?** – The Council plans to work with tributary groups along the Missouri River to obtain funding for common projects that solve water quality issues along the tributaries as well as the mainstem.

Gallatin Conservation District
Broadwater Conservation District
Lewis & Clark Conservation District
Cascade County Conservation District
Chouteau County Conservation District

Blaine County Conservation District
Big Sandy Conservation District
Fergus County Conservation District
Petroleum County Conservation District
Phillips Conservation District

Garfield County Conservation District
Valley County Conservation District
McCone Conservation District
Roosevelt County Conservation District
Richland County Conservation District